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Viewing cable 06MEXICO1509, ROSARIO GREEN ANALYZES PRESIDENTIAL RACE

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MEXICO1509	2006-03-20 22:14	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Mexico

Appears in these articles:

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VZCZCXRO5916
RR RUEHCD RUEHGD RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHRD RUEHRS RUEHTM
DE RUEHME #1509/01 0792214
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 202214Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9747
INFO RUEHXC/ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

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06MEXICO1509
Embassy Mexico
CONFIDENTIAL

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INFO RUEHXC/ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MX](#)
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 001509

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/19/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MX](#)

SUBJECT: ROSARIO GREEN ANALYZES PRESIDENTIAL RACE

REF: 05 MEXICO 7200

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Leslie A. Bassett, Reasons:
1.4(B/D).

¶1. (C) Summary: In a wide-ranging conversation, Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) Secretary General and former Foreign Minister Rosario Green offered to poloff her analysis of Mexico's presidential race. She attributed Madrazo's current electoral problems in part to the fact that the PRI was unaccustomed to running a presidential campaign from the opposition and lacked an authoritative figure in the party -- such as a sitting president -- to enforce party discipline. She also cited the scandals involving prominent PRI politicians Arturo Montiel and Mario Marin, and teachers' union leader Elba Esther Gordillo's desire to exact revenge for Madrazo's numerous slights (reftel), as contributing to the party's poor public image. Notwithstanding the difficult electoral panorama that Madrazo faces, she argued that the candidate remained competitive, because of the PRI's allegedly large base of reliable voters. She argued that as President, Madrazo would do a much better job of managing the U.S.-Mexico relationship than President Fox has done, asserting that Madrazo has much more realistic expectations for the relationship than does Fox or, by extension, Felipe Calderon. She sought to portray presidential front-runner Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador as a dangerous authoritarian who would cause capital flight. At several times during the conversation, she gave the impression of being outside of Madrazo's inner circle, an impression consistent with what we have heard from other contacts. End summary.

Answering "an Authentic Cry for Help"

¶2. (C) In a rambling monologue, former Foreign Minister and current PRI Secretary General offered poloff her views on Mexico's presidential race. (Note: Green was named PRI Secretary General on September 30, 2005, succeeding Gordillo,

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who resigned the post as the result of a long-standing feud with former party president and current presidential candidate Roberto Madrazo. End note.) Green told poloff that she agreed to resign her position at St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas and return to Mexico because she considered the PRI's offer of the position "an authentic cry for help." She believed Mexico was facing a potential "institutional crisis" that threatened its democracy, and that under the circumstances, she felt a moral obligation to return to Mexico and reenter political life.

Death "by 1,000 Defections"

¶3. (C) Green enumerated several factors underlying PRI candidate Roberto Madrazo's poor standing in current polls. Perhaps most significantly, she noted that the PRI had never before run a presidential campaign without holding the presidency, and that it was struggling to adapt to its role as an opposition party. The party was accustomed to having an all-powerful "godfather" figure -- i.e., an incumbent president -- to mediate disputes between rival factions and to impose discipline on the party. The lack of such a dominant figure had led to considerable division within the party, and permitted disaffected PRIistas -- most notably, Sonora Governor Eduardo Bours -- to run a "counter campaign" against the party's nominee. She also singled out the scandals involving such prominent PRIistas as former Mexico state Governor Arturo Montiel and current Puebla state

Governor Mario Marin. She added that in the face of poor party discipline, renegade party members, such as Elba Esther Gordillo, were free to pursue their personal vendettas against the candidate, seeking to cause Madrazo's political "death by 1,000 defections."

Counting on the "Voto Duro"

14. (C) Green argued that notwithstanding the problems confronting the PRI, Madrazo remained a competitive candidate. She argued that with the party's base of loyal voters (voto duro) of 10-11 million, it needed to win fewer than 5 million swing voters to win the election. She argued that this election would likely be decided by young, first time voters, which was why Madrazo had entered into an alliance with the Green Party (PVEM). She said Madrazo would soon air new television advertisements in order to reintroduce himself to the electorate, and demonstrate that his poor public reputation was not a reflection of his true self.

Madrazo Has Realistic Expectations for U.S.-Mexico Relations

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15. (C) Green sought to assure poloff that Madrazo would manage U.S.-Mexico relations far better than President Fox or, by extension, Felipe Calderon. She said that while Madrazo believed the U.S. and Mexico needed an immigration accord, Madrazo did not seek "the whole enchilada" -- unrestricted Mexican immigration into the U.S. -- as favored by President Fox early in his term. She said Madrazo would be satisfied with a significant increase in the number of H1B and H2 visas made available to Mexico. She added that while Madrazo understood the U.S. had the right to protect its border, including with a border wall, such a proposal offended Mexicans, and that U.S. interests would be better served by a high-tech "virtual wall."

Better the Devil You Know

16. (C) Green reiterated the usual critique of Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD) candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO), arguing that he was authoritarian and extremist. She predicted that if he lost the election, he would refuse to accept the results unless the winner enjoyed a margin of at least 10 percent. She intimated that AMLO would damage the Mexican economy, arguing that he only knew how to fight capital, not how to cooperate with it. Unlike AMLO, Madrazo sought to eradicate poverty, not wealth. She said only Madrazo had a chance of defeating AMLO, and that Calderon was already out of contention -- a surprising assertion considering that the PAN leads the PRI in most polls.

Hoping for a Senate Seat....

17. (C) As for her own personal ambitions, Green said that she had registered as a Senate candidate and expected to be named a candidate on the party's national (plurinomial) list, although she did not indicate whether she expected to be named to a sufficiently high position to guarantee her election. (Note: At least two embassy contacts in the PRI have told us that she would not be given a high position on the party's plurinomial list. End note.)

Comment: Madrazo's Latest Victim?

18. (C) Green stayed close to the party line throughout our conversation; indeed, we were surprised only by her assertion that the PAN was already out of contention, since it continues to lead the PRI in most polls. Otherwise, Green

gave the impression of being something of a figurehead as party Secretary General. She seemed less informed about internal party politics than some lower ranking contacts, and gave the impression of not being in Madrazo's inner circle, confirming what we have heard elsewhere. Such an impression would be further confirmed if she is relegated to an uncompetitive position on the party's legislative list, an anomalous result for the party's second-ranking official. If that turns out to be the case, we will not be able to escape the impression that Madrazo lured her back to Mexico with empty promises last September, when according to party by-laws, he urgently needed a woman to fill the post abandoned by Gordillo. If her party loyalty is not duly rewarded, Green may prove to be but the latest victim of Roberto Madrazo's lifetime of double dealing. End comment.

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